

DANC 228 | Hip-Hop Dance and Identity

Instructor: Julio Medina

Office Hours: MW 2:30pm-3:45pm or by appointment

Office: Rich Building Suite 115

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Class Days/Times: MW 4pm-5:15pm

Class Location: Schwartz Center Dance Studio

Term: Fall 2021



Course Description This course explores hip-hop dance/culture, emphasizing race and ethnicity via lectures, discussions, screenings, readings, and movement sessions. We will trace the evolution of hip-hop dance styles from their origins in New York during the 1970s to today's global presence. The course also considers how dance studios commodify street dance forms to reveal racial and ethnic inequalities. In addition, we will explore hip-hop sustainability, and how hip-hop culture/artists address environmental justice issues. We will contextualize hip-hop in the African Diaspora and delineate how hip-hop unifies people across racial and ethnic barriers through an intersectional approach. This semester is unique because this class is a part of the Arts and Social Justice Fellowship. The class will facilitate cultural self-awareness, tools for self-expression, and openness by considering race, sexuality, class, authenticity, and gender within hip-hop culture.

By the end of the course, students will be able to:

1. Develop a critical awareness of how racial and ethnic antagonisms and inequality develop historically through individual, institutional, and cultural forces.
2. Recognize how race and ethnicity intersect with other group identifications or ascriptions, such as language, religion, class, ability, nationality, sexuality, age, and gender.
3. Adopt tools to communicate more effectively and respectfully with others from various racial and ethnic perspectives.
4. Describe how race, sexuality, class, and gender have informed the development of hip-hop dance and its cultural framework(s).

Readings | PDF's Provided

Underground Dance Masters: Final History of a Forgotten Era by Thomas Guzman-Sanchez

Foundation by Joseph G. Schloss

Can't Stop Won't Stop: A History of the Hip-Hop Generation by Jeff Chang

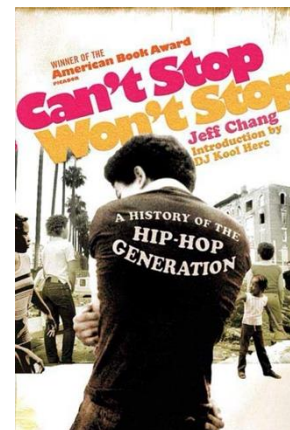
Black Noise: Rap Music and Black Culture in Contemporary America by Tricia Rose

C'Mon to My House: Underground House Dancing by Sally R. Sommer

Why White Kids Love Hip-Hop: Wansktas, Wiggers, Wannabes... by Bakari Kitwana

"Global Breakdancing and the Intercultural Body" by Halifu Osumare

"The Miseducation of Hip-Hop" by Moncell Durden



Evaluation Method

Assignment	Weight
Discussion & Participation	20%
Online Modules	20%
Movement Sessions	20%
Elements of Identity Project	20%
Research Paper	20%



Assignments and Activities

- **Discussion & Participation** Students will actively engage in discussions of readings, lectures, and film screenings. (LEARNING OUTCOMES 1 &2)

 - Full participation means that you are actively listening and learning (taking notes, asking questions, making eye contact with instructor). Please put your phones away once class begins. I expect you to contribute at least one question, comment, or insight per class. Remember, learning is a two-way street, I am learning from you as you are from me.
 - You are allowed 3 excused or unexcused absences. After that your grade drops a full letter grade. 4=B, 5= C, 6=D, 7=F.
 - Tardiness/Observation
 - 2 Tardies/observations = one absence.
 - If you are more than 10 minutes late to a movement session, you will be asked to observe the class.

- **Weekly Online Modules**

 - Each week you will have modules to complete via Canvas. This will include reading, viewing, or listening to material outside of class. You will also have the opportunity to reflect and share your takeaways with the material via online forums like VoiceThread.

- **Movement Sessions** Students engage in embodiment and performance by learning different dance styles such as breaking, krumping, house, and vogue. Students will also demonstrate the ability to free style during in-class cyphers (improvisational circles).

 - The purpose of this is to have a physical experience that leads to empathy, understanding, and respect for the specific dance cultures within hip-hop. (LEARNING OUTCOME 3)

- **Elements of Identity Project** Using one or more hip-hop elements (DJ, MC, Graffiti, Breaking, Fashion, Beatbox), students will create an original work of art or performance. The project should express and embrace individual identity (race, ethnicity, gender, class, language) without disrespecting one another. This performance will be presented to the class.

 - Purpose: To learn effective and expressive communication of self while practicing acceptance and support of others. (LEARNING OUTCOME 3)

- **Research Paper** Students will select one of the street dance forms covered in the course and submit a 4-6 page research paper describing how race, sexuality, gender, ethnicity, class, and or language have informed the development of that dance. In addition, students will address how their own identity intersects with hip-hop. (LEARNING OUTCOME 4)

Attendance policy

This semester due to the pandemic, some students might be sick or will need to go into isolation or quarantine. If you are sick, understand that I will be flexible about attendance. Please make sure to email me so that we can discuss your individual circumstances. For students in quarantine who are well, I will provide ways that you can keep up with your schoolwork. Please also contact me via email if you are in quarantine.

Guidelines for engagement

Listen respectfully, without interrupting.

Respect one another's views, even when you disagree with them.

Criticize ideas, not individuals.

Commit to learning, not debating.

Avoid blame and speculation. Support your argument with evidence.

What is said in class stays in class. Hard conversations and statements should remain between members of the class creating a brave space.

Speak from the "I" perspective: don't assume that you can speak for members of a group that you are a part of.

Diversity & Inclusion

At its core, this course embraces a multiplicity of voices and perspectives. We respect people from all backgrounds and recognize the differences among ourselves, including racial and ethnic identities, religious practices, and gender expressions. Please let me know what name you like to be called and your gender pronouns.

Accommodations for Disabilities

As the instructor of this course I endeavor to provide an inclusive learning environment. I want every student to succeed. The Department of Accessibility Services (DAS) works with students who have disabilities to provide reasonable accommodations. It is your responsibility to request accommodations. In order to receive consideration for reasonable accommodations, you must [register with the DAS](#). Accommodations cannot be retroactively applied so you need to contact DAS as early as possible and contact me as early as possible in the semester to discuss the plan for implementation of your accommodations.

For additional information about accessibility and accommodations, please contact the Department of Accessibility Services at (404) 727-9877 or accessibility@emory.edu.

Stress management and mental health

As a student, you may find that personal and academic stressors in your life, including those related to remote study, COVID-19, economic instability, and/or racial injustice, are creating barriers to learning this semester. Many students face personal and environmental challenges that can interfere with their academic success and overall wellbeing. If you are struggling with this class, please visit me during office hours or contact me via email at XXXX@emory.edu. If you are feeling overwhelmed and think you might benefit from additional support, please know that there are people who care and offices to support you at Emory. These services – including confidential resources – are provided by staff who are respectful of students' diverse backgrounds. For an extensive list of well-being resources on campus, please go to: <http://campuslife.emory.edu/support/index.html>. And keep in mind that Emory offers free, 24/7 emotional, mental health, and medical support resources via TimelyCare:

<https://timelycare.com/emory>.

Other Emory resources include:

[Counseling & Psychological Services](#)

[Office of Spiritual & Religious Life](#)

[Student Case Management and Interventions Services](#)

[Student Health Services Psychiatry](#)

[Support During A Crisis: A Guide for Faculty & Staff](#)

[Emory Anytime Student Health Services](#)

Honor Code

The honor code is in effect throughout the semester. By taking this course, you affirm that it is a violation of the code to cheat on exams, to plagiarize, to deviate from the teacher's instructions about collaboration on work that is submitted for grades, to give false information to a faculty member, and to undertake any other form of academic misconduct. You agree that the teacher is entitled to move you to another seat during examinations, without explanation. You also affirm that if you witness others violating the code you have a duty to report them to the honor council.

Land Acknowledgement and History Statement

Emory University is located on Muscogee (Creek) land. Emory University was founded in 1836, during a period of sustained oppression, land dispossession, and forced removals of Muscogee (Creek) and Ani'yunwi'ya (Cherokee) peoples from Georgia and the Southeast. In the [First Treaty of Indian Springs](#) (January 8th, 1821), signed by the US government and the Muscogee Creek Nation, the Muscogee Creek were forced to relinquish the land which is now present-day DeKalb County and the home of Emory's first campus, Oxford College, as well as the main campus on Clifton Road.

By all accounts, this was a [coerced treaty](#). At the treaty's signing, this tract of ceded land (included within [116 on map](#)) became part of the State of Georgia. In 1822, parts of the land ceded in the 1821 treaty area were incorporated as DeKalb County; this includes the land where Emory University's main campus (established 1917) is located. The town of Covington (founded 1822) also falls within the 1821 treaty area, and is the home of Emory's Oxford College (founded 1836). Muscogee Creeks who chose to remain in the southeast were forced to move west into the Upper Creek towns in Alabama after their land was ceded. Many Lower Creeks living in the ceded area left Georgia and relocated in or near Indian Territory (present day Oklahoma).

It is significant that [Emory University was founded in 1836](#), fifteen years after this First Treaty of Indian Springs, as the sons of the new settlers were beginning to reach college age. The 1821 treaty and others during this period led to massive land dispossession from Indigenous nations, and allowed for continued [expansion of the Southeastern plantation economy and enslavement of Africans and their descendants](#). These facts also form part of the background to the [horrific forced removal](#) of over 20,000 Muscogee Creek people from Alabama that occurred in 1836-1837 and through which approximately 3,500 Muscogee Creek people died en route.

The [Muscogee Creek Nation](#) (OK) is currently the fourth largest Tribal Nation with approximately 80,000 citizens. The [Poarch Creek Indians](#) (AL) is the only federally recognized Tribal Nation in Alabama, and has approximately 3,000 citizens.

We are looking forward to seeing Emory University begin to reckon with this history and its enduring consequences, and begin to commit to [reparative actions](#).

Notes:

*The traditional spelling is "Mvskoke." Current Tribal Nations use the spelling "Muscogee."

*A number of recent discussions highlight the importance of connecting land acknowledgement statements to meaningful actions and resources, especially ones that do not reinscribe "[settler-colonial](#)" logics. (Also see [here](#), [here](#) and [here](#).)

*See: [Native Land](#), a searchable map of Indigenous territories worldwide.

This statement was developed by Emory [faculty](#) Professor Craig Womack and Professor Debra Vidali, through consultation with leading historians of this region, including Historian of Emory University Professor Gary Hauk. Emory University has not yet adopted an official land acknowledgement. Please check back later this Spring for additional statements, in different voices, regarding what it means to recognize, experience, and acknowledge a relationship to the land that we are on and what it means to acknowledge and connect with the histories of this land and its peoples.

Technical Support

We will be using online resources like Canvas, VoiceThread, and Google Docs for our course. If you ever have any technical difficulties (need a laptop, can't sign on, your computer crashes, etc.) please reach out to Emory's technology support crew: www.It.emory.edu SDL-help@emory.edu Or contact the University Help Desk: (404) 727-7777



What's Next?

Check out the Weekly Overview below and let me know if you have any questions!

Important Calendar Dates

Wednesday, August 24, 2022

First day of class

tbd

Dance Info Session

tbd

Emory Dance Company Auditions

tbd

Labor Day - No Class

September 9-10, 2022, 7:30pm @ Schwartz

Dance Concert **REQUIRED**

October 10-11, 2022

Fall Break - No Class

November 18-20, 2021, 7:30pm @ Schwartz

Emory Dance Company Show

November 23-25, 2022

Thanksgiving Recess

Tuesday, December 6, 2021 @ 6pm

ASJ Showing - **REQUIRED**

Tuesday, December 6, 2022

Last Day of Class

December 7-17, 2022

Final Exam Period

Tentative Course Schedule

Week 1 – Introductions and The Birth of a Movement

8/24 Review Syllabus and Introductions
HW: Watch *Hip-Hop Evolution* Episode 1, Season 1 “The Foundation”



Week 2 - The Elements

8/29 Lecture: Hip-Hop Historical Overview & Rise of Hip-Hop
HW: Read “Five Premises for a Culturally Sensitive Approach to Dance” by Deidre Sklar

8/31 Lecture: The Elements

HW: Read *Furious Styles: The Evolution of Style in the Seven-Mile World* by Jeff Chang, Read *Origins of Black Body Politics* by Ronald L. Jackson II, pp. 25-44, Complete LP Assignment

Week 3 – I Know You Got Soul

9/5 LABOR DAY

9/7 Discussion and In-Class Viewing: Summer of Soul Excerpts

Read: “The Original Essence of the Dance: History, Community, and Classic B-Boy Records” by Joseph G. Schloss

HW: Read *Soul Sonic Forces: Technology, Orality, and Black Cultural Practice* by Tricia Rose,

Required Event: *Kinetic Poise*, 9/9-9/11 @ Schwartz Center, 7:30pm

Week 4 – It’s A Party

9/12 Lecture: Social Soul

HW: Rap Assignment Post on Canvas

9/14 Movement Session: Hip-Hop Party Dances

HW: Read *Underground Dance Masters: Final History of a Forgotten Era* by Thomas Guzman-Sanchez, Watch *Soul Train* video, Watch *Copyright Criminals (2009)*, Sampling Assignment

Week 5 – Wordsmiths & Trailblazing Women in Hip-Hop

9/19 Lecture: Rap and Word Play

HW: Listen to podcast “Missy Elliot: Digital Innovator” on *There Are No Girls On the Internet* by iHeartRadio

9/21 Lecture: Female Identifying Pioneers

HW: Read “Why Don’t We Love These Hoes?” by Mahaliah Ayana Little, Watch “Kimiko Versatile” in *Move* on Netflix, Post on VoiceThread

Week 6 – Hip-Hop Sustainability

9/26 Lecture: Environmentally Conscious Hip-Hop

HW: Research Assignment: Who are the Hip-Hop Artists that address Environmental Justice Issues? How? Post on Canvas, Read [“The Sustainable Soul of Hip Hop”](#)

9/28 Nature Walk and Discussion

HW: Research Assignment: What are pressing environmental justice issues in Atlanta? Post on Canvas

Week 7 – Hip-Hop and the Prison Industrial Complex

10/3 Viewing and Discussion “The Birth of Gangsta Rap” on Hip-Hop Evolution

HW: Listen to Podcast Louder Than A Riot “The Conspiracy Against Hip-Hop” by NPR

10/5 Movement Session: Hip-Hop

HW: Research Assignment: What Hip-Hop or Street Dances developed in Atlanta?

Week 8 – Fall Break

10/10 – No Class

10/12 – Movement Session: Freestyle and Collaborative Choreography

HW: Read “The Real Enemy” in *Can’t Stop, Won’t Stop*, Post on VoiceThread



Week 9 – Vogue

10/17 – TBD

10/19 – Viewing of *How Do I Look* (2006)

HW: Read “The Miseducation of Hip-Hop” by Moncell Durden, Listen to podcast Words that Move Me, “Deeper Roots with Moncell Durden” by Dana Wilson, Submit Preliminary Research Topic

Week 10 – This Is My House

10/24 Lecture: Disco to House

10/26 Movement Session: House

HW: Read: *C’Mon to My House: Underground House Dancing* by Sally R. Sommer, View: *Check Your Body at the Door (2010)* by Sally R. Sommer

Week 11- We Got Latin Soul - Latinx Identities in Hip-Hop

10/31 Lecture and Offering: Ni De Aqui, Ni De Alla, Excerpts from *I’m No Longer Here (2019)*

11/2 Movement Session: House

HW: **Deejay Assignment, Optional: Tune into RedBull BC One Final**

Week 12 - The Healing Power of Krump

11/7 Viewing and Discussion: *Raised by Krump (2018)* by Maceo Frost

11/9 Movement Session: Krump as Sustainability

HW: **Work on Research Paper, Read *The Black Beat Made Visible* by Thomas De Frantz**

Week 13 – Movement is Life

11/14 ASJ Project Brainstorm

11/16 Meditation Session

HW: Read *Global Breakdancing and the Intercultural Body* by Halifu Osumare, Graffiti Assignment Post on Canvas

Optional Event: Emory Dance Company Concert @ Schwartz Center, 11/18-11/20, 7:30pm



Week 14 – Thanksgiving Recess

11/21 Research Paper Draft Due | No Class

11/23 – No Class. Gobble Gobble.

Week 15 – Global Hip Hop

11/28 Lecture and Discussion: The Intercultural Body

11/30 ASJ Project

**HW: Work on Research Paper, Complete Course Evaluation,
Work on ASJ Project**

Week 16 - I See You

12/5 ASJ Project last class

12/6 Art and Social Justice Showing at 6pm

12/10 Research Papers due at 3pm via Canvas

**Syllabus is subject to change at the instructor's discretion. The instructor will discuss modifications and post changes on Canvas.*

